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S/USSES FOR SE GRATION  
NSC FOR MICHELLE GAVIN  
AF FOR A/S CARSON

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SUBJECT: SPLM Presidential Advisor on Electoral Dynamics

CLASSIFIED BY: REWhitehead, CDA, STATE, EXEC; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

1.B (C) Summary.B On February 8 Charge met with Sudanese People's Liberation Movement's (SPLM) Mansour Khalid, an Advisor to Government of National Unity (GoNU) President BashirB to discuss the electoral environment.B Mansour described growing National Congress Party (NCP) anxiety as the April elections approach, including ominous undertones of what might happen should Bashir not prevail at the polls.B He alsoB provided interesting insights into security concerns in the South, which he insisted are driven by SPLM politics in Juba far more than tribal rivalries in the outlying states.B Mansour shared his view that purported documentary evidence indicating that the North has provided arms to proxies in the South is in all likelihood a concoction.B End summary.

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A Nervous NCP  
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12. (C) An expansive Mansour Khalid described mounting angst in senior NCP ranks following the nomination of Yasser Armun as the SPLM candidate for the national presidency.B He noted that the NCP had chosen not to run a candidate for the presidency of Southern Sudan in the hope that the SPLM would reciprocateB in the North, or even partner with the NCP.B The SPLM's decision to shelve Pagan Amum (who Mansour claimed did not want the national nomination anyway) and Malik Agar, the early front runners, and go with Yasser Armun had taken the NCP by surprise.B A Northerner with name recognition from his role as spokesman in Addis Ababa, Yasser was a "clever rabble-rouser" with sufficient political acumen to recognize the limits, Mansour said.B Suddenly faced with an unknown quantity, the NCP had developed a case of the jitters.B Instead of the sweeping Bashir win that the NCP had long expected, there was the (admittedly long-shot) possibility of Yasser sweeping the South; scoring well in the East, Darfur and other marginalized areas; and drawing votes from disaffected elements of the riparian tribes.B This raised the specter of Bashir being forced into a second round, with the outcome not guaranteed.B This was the worst case scenario for the NCP, the John Garang electoral calculus revived.

3.B (C) Mansour said that the tenor of conversation had changed in his recent discussions with GoNU First Vice President Ali Osman Taha and other NCP heavyweights.B They had hinted -- although never explicitly stated -- that in the event of Bashir's defeat at the polls, they could not predict how the security services would react.B Mansour took this either as a veiled warning that Yasser should withdraw from the race or an implied threat that the security services would not permit power to change hands, thus leaving the NCP -- probably minus Bashir -- to pull the strings behind the scenes in the post-election period.B He said that if this were to occur, there was a risk of instability in the North. He did not doubt the NCP loyalties of senior SAF officers, but

there were indications that the lower ranks did not share this view and could not be counted on to fall automatically into line.

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The Problem is Juba Politics, not Tribes or Cattle Raids  
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4.B B (C) Turning to the South, Mansour admitted that the election could spawn violence, but noted that there was a mistaken outside perception that such violence was tribally driven and could be resolved on that level.B Hs said that violence surrounding cattle raids, grazing/water issues and transhumance passage had been present for generations, and he did not understand why outsiders expected these to cease abruptly.B He judged local tribal chiefs and the Government of Southern Sudan Peace Commission (supported by various donors) as capable of dealing with such disputes as they cropped up.B In Mansour's view, the real problem facing elections in the South was Juba-centered and driven by SPLM political figures whose ambitions overshadowed their loyalty of the SPLM.B He explained that Sudanese parties in both the North and South historically have suffered from indiscipline that led to a plethora of "independent" candidates from the same party campaigning for the same position, each claiming that s/he was the choice of the people.B In some instances, the tribal affiliations of rival candidates risked provoking violence.B In others, private militias loyal to rival candidates posed a risk.B He said that the SPLM has sought to sidestep such problems by insisting that all SPLM members back the party's selected candidate on pain of exclusion from the

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party. The SPLM quickly backed off this threat when faced with deepening inter-party schisms, and the Politburo continued to search for a solution.B Mansour said that the NCP suffered from the same internal pressures, although to a lesser degree.

5.B (C) Mansour reviewed various competing candidates for governorships, the most contentious positions,, and charted out the fault lines that these posed.B Among the illustrative examples:

Eastern Equatoria:B the incumbent governor is Aloisio Emur Ojetuk, a Latuka from Torit County who is popular.B He was awarded Salva Kiir's annual recognition as the best governor in the South last year; despite this, the SPLM chose Gen. Loius Lobong Lojore, a Toposa as its candidate.B Ojetuk has declared his intention to contest as an independent, raising the specter of possible inter-tribal clashes.

Unity State:B Brig. Gen. Taban Deng Gai, a Nuer who is the incumbent in Unity State, faces a stiff challenge from Angelina Teny, SPLM Federal State Minister and the wife of GoSS Vice President Riek Machar.B Also a Nuer, Teny is backed by Paulino Matiep; while Taban Deng is a close ally of Salva Kiir, SPLA Chief of Staff Hoth, and powerful Nuer Energy Minister John Luk Jok.B The prospects for outbreaks of violence are amplified in Unity because despite their common tribal roots, Taban Deng, Machar and Matiep all have armed supporters at their call.B Mansour feared that a split SPLM vote could result in theirB loss ofB the governorship.

Central Equatoria State:B This contest offers another mixture of tribal rivalry and militia muscle.B Incumbent Major Gen. Clement Wani Konga is a Mundari tribesmen who led a powerful militia during the war.B Formerly the NCP Governor, then independent and now SPLM incumbent governor and candidate, he faces a challenge from GoSS Presidential Advisor for Diplomatic Affairs Alfred Lado Gore, a Bari from Juba County.B Political observers predict that the defeat of the corrupt and unpopular Wani could lead to serious clashes between the Mundari and Bari.

Unity State:B Major Gen. Paul Malong Away, the incumbent and the official SPLM candidate, faces a challenge from the popular and competent Dau Jortong, who is supported by former GoSS Finance Ministers Arthur Akuin and Kuol Athian.B He is the putative favorite, but because both are Dinka, widespread violence seems unlikely.

Western Equatoria State: B Incumbent governor and SPLM candidate

Jemma Nunu Kumba faces popular independent candidate Joseph Bakosoro.B Both are Zande and neither has militia support, so little violence is anticipated.

Jongeli State:B Incumbent SPLM Governor Kuol Munyang, a Dinka in a plurality Nuer state, is nonetheless popular and is expected to win.B Although the level ofB tribal violence associated with cattle raiding remains high, the election probably will not be a driver of such conflict.

6.B (C) Mansour emphasized that Juba holds the key to reducing political violence throughout the South during the campaign and polling as well as in the aftermath.B The success of the SPLM or outside players to convince the competing candidates to instruct their supporters to eschew violence will determine the comportment of the elections, Mansour stressed.B Increased police presence and UNMIS deployment into the states can help, he concluded, but the battle for a peaceful elections will be won in Juba, not outside.

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A DisruptiveB NCP Role?  
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7.B (C) Asked if he believed reports that the NCP is fomenting violence in the South, Mansour replied that it was conceivable.B He cited Lam Akol, whom he termed "immoral," and General Gabriel Tang as the two individuals he thought most likely to promote violence to destabilize the elections and the GoSS.B Despite this, he offered as an aside, his view that the SPLM would not prevent Akol from campaigning in the South, although it was clear that some areas would be no-go zones for security reasons.B Mansour continued that he had seen no physical or documentary evidence linking the NCP to violence or arms transfers to proxies in the South.B Mansour cited documents purportedly obtained from NISS officials in Khartoum that detailed arms transfers to at least one individual in the South.B He said that Kiir had shown this document to Vice President Taha during the latter's most recent visit to Juba; other

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SPLM officials had also shown it to various visiting delegations. Mansour remarked that he would have advised Kiir not to have presentedB the letter had he, Mansour, seen it in advance.B The NCP was certainly capable of actions worse than this, but in Mansour's opinion, the document was probably a forgery.B He observed that the NISS was far too cunning to leave such obvious and incriminating fingerprints on its handiwork.

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Comment  
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8.B (S )B Comment.B Always value-added, Mansour offered some intriguing insights.B We were especially interested by the speculationB that the NCP might unleash the security services should it perceive that its grip on power could be loosened by the ballot box.B We are unable to assess the likelihood of such an outcome, but we accept Mansour's contention that this scenario could present a risk of instability in the North.B We have seen reports in other channels that describe growing disaffection with the NCP in some military circles.B We agree completely that turmoil within SPLM leadership ranks poses a greater threat to peaceful elections than the traditional cycle of inter-tribal rivalries in the South.

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